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**CHALLENGES CONFRONTING
METROPOLITAN PORTLAND'S
TRANSPORTATION DECISION-MAKING
REGIME**

by

Sheldon M. Edner
Professor of Public Administration
(Principal Investigator)

Seymour Adler
Associate Professor of Urban
Studies and Planning

Peter B. Davis
Research Assistant

Center for Urban Studies
Portland State University
Portland, OR 97207-0751

Transportation Northwest (TransNow)
Department of Civil Engineering
University of Washington
Box 352700
Seattle, Washington 98195

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CHALLENGES CONFRONTING METROPOLITAN PORTLAND'S TRANSPORTATION DECISION-MAKING REGIME

A regional transport decision-making regime - a set of institutional structures and behavioral norms governing relations between political actors - evolved in the latter 1970s in the Portland metropolitan area. This evolution took place during the process of restructuring the region's approach to the utilization of transport as a mechanism for shaping metropolitan development. The most important product of this decision-making regime has been and continues to be a regional consensus regarding project priorities and general regional goals.

In this paper we discuss the structure and dynamics of this consensus process through an exploration of a series of challenges to the regime. These challenges include: (1) cultivating new sources of project finance, as the federal government reduces its contribution; and (2) integrating transport projects with regional and local land use plans designed to manage urban growth; in the context of (3) intensifying competition between business centers within the region, as rapidly growing suburban areas seek transport projects that will facilitate locally-oriented economic growth. We first discuss the institutional and normative elements of the regional consensus process in historical context. We then develop a set of case studies that illuminate the challenges confronting the regime and the nature of regime responses.

THE NATURE OF THE CONSENSUS

In the mid-1970s the Portland metropolitan region struggled to establish an alternative approach to continued dependence on the automobile as the principal mode of transport. Recognizing that the central business district was dying and that cost of more freeways to serve it would be prohibitive the region sought to define and establish a role for transit as an alternative transport mode. The struggle crystallized around a financing mechanism that would provide not only funds for transit projects but enhancements to the existing highway structure as a means for simultaneously serving CBD and suburban **transport** needs. The effort focused on an interstate **withdrawal/transfer** process producing a consensus that a light rail transit (LRT) line linking the City of Portland central business district (CBD) and the commercial center of Gresham, a suburban city in eastern Multnomah County (which also includes Portland), should be the region's top priority project. In addition to this LRT line, activists assembled a package of about 140 other highway and transit projects to be financed with withdrawal funds.

Transportation activists demonstrated the crucial importance of a regional consensus when seeking to persuade higher level governmental decision-makers to accept this package. Since state and national officials are very reluctant to make choices regarding local projects when the locals are themselves in conflict regarding priorities, presenting a united front plays a key role in facilitating financial participation by higher levels of government. The regional consensus enabled Portland-area representatives in the state legislature to secure necessary state matching commitments, and Oregon representatives in Congress to secure funding commitments at the federal level.

The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) are the two most important continuing institutional expressions of the withdrawal period. The dominant cultural feature of these committees is the value they attach to sustaining the consensus building process that emerged during the latter 1970s. This work of sustenance has been greatly facilitated by the relative stability of regime personnel, and their commitment to professionalism. The

creation of the committees provided the structural means for institutionalizing the regime's values and processes.

BEGINNINGS

One of the requirements for federal funding of highway projects is the presence of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which meets federal requirements. (Weiner, 1988). In Portland, prior to 1978, this function was fulfilled by a regional body, the Columbia Region Association of Governments (CRAG). The jurisdiction of CRAG included Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas Counties in Oregon and Clark County, Washington (which includes Vancouver, Washington). Membership of the CRAG Board included the City of Portland, members from each county commission and representatives from the larger suburban cities. Voting was weighted by the size of the jurisdiction and tended to be dominated by Portland and **Multnomah** County which held almost a majority of the votes necessary to make decisions.

This arrangement presented several distinct challenges to effective governance. The local decision process was substantially cooperative, depending solely on the agreement of members for any activity. While the larger jurisdictions clearly set the tone and direction for decisions, they needed the votes of at least some smaller jurisdictions to obtain final decision outcomes. Yet, CRAG also was hampered by the omission of key local institutions: the Public Transit Division, Oregon Department of Transportation, the metropolitan mass transportation provider, and the port authority were not direct participants in the process. State involvement was limited to the Highway Commission and its role in the interstate highway system and the regional transportation plan. With the exclusion of some major transportation agencies, and limitation of state involvement, transportation planning and decisions were driven by the interests of general purpose jurisdictions and the highway side of the Oregon Department of Transportation.

At the request of Portland's Mayor Neil Goldschmidt, Governor Tom **McCall** created a task force in May of 1973 to bring clarity to the transportation planning process in the Portland Metropolitan area. Support for this restructuring arose from "--dissatisfaction with the Portland Vancouver **Metropolitan** Area Transportation Study (PVMATS), citizen

reaction to the energy crisis (of 1973), the formation of Tri-Met, and the recognition of **CRAG's** inability to function as a regional planning agency --(which) led political leaders in the area to the decision that it was time to reshape and restructure the workings of the area's planning and policy-making activities." (Final Report of the Governor's Task Force on Transportation, 1975). The resulting political conflicts and tension caused local political leaders, most notably Portland Mayor Neil Goldschmidt, to request the Governor's intrusion into local decision making. Finally, the **GTF** recommended the strengthening of the CRAG technical capacity, unifying the planning process and helping to develop comprehensive recommendations.

Impetus for local change came from the concerted political efforts of Neil Goldschmidt (Portland Mayor), Gerry **Drummond** (Tri-Met Board Chairman), and Glen Jackson (Chairman of Oregon Transportation Commission) who controlled a voting majority after the reorganization of CRAG. Together they pushed for a greater consolidation of all regional planning efforts rather than multiple **processes**. The resulting organization yielded a process which went beyond the MPO requirements that CRAG had previously fulfilled. Each of the entities which was part of the transportation planning process in CRAG brought with them part of the funding which they had received when they were independent entities. The incentive to such cooperation was cost savings for each and was further motivated by the ability to access regional Federal Aid Urban monies. The product was an ability to more effectively articulate a regional perspective on issues and integrate inter-jurisdictional trade-offs within a metropolitan wide decision system.

THE **EMERGENCE** OF METRO

While efforts were underway to build a regional transportation planning and decision system, an independent effort to create a regional government was coming to an end. The Portland Metropolitan Boundary Commission had received a grant from the **U.S.** Department of Housing and Urban Development in **1975** to develop a proposal to form a regional governance structure for the Portland metropolitan area. Through the efforts of a citizens' committee a legislative proposal emerged in **1977** that led to state authorization of a regional vote on the creation of a new entity to provide regional **services** to portions of Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties. The new entity would have an independently elected board with twelve electoral districts exercising the regional authority to provide solid waste, drainage, zoo, and planning services. Authorized by state legislation and a citizen vote in early **1978**, **METRO** came into existence in January, **1979**. Created by merging two existing entities, CRAG and the Metropolitan Service District, it absorbed the authority of those agencies and was also empowered to assume responsibility for the metropolitan transit agency through action of its board.

The effect of creating this new entity was to shift the transportation planning process, formally, out of the hands of CRAG and its local government officials representing their respective jurisdictions, to an elected body representing geographic segments of the region. The METRO commissioners represented not cities and counties but segments of the metropolitan area. Further, the new entity represented an additional centralization of technical staffing since its staff assumed responsibility for the development of regional transportation plans. The cooperative efforts of the staffs from multiple jurisdictions was replaced by a dedicated transportation planning staff, supported the staffs of the region's cities, transit, **and** highway entities.

As a final step before its disappearance, CRAG, as a result of Neil Goldschmidt's efforts, adopted a resolution attempting to set an institutional agenda for the fledgling **METRO**. The resolution sought to **define** the projects and priorities to be funded with the

interstate withdrawal funds. METRO attempted to adopt this resolution as a confirmation of the region's transportation plan. The effort was rejected by the federal government because it did not view METRO as a general purpose government or as composed of representatives of general purpose governments, a requirement of **MPO's** under federal regulations. This was confirmed by a State Attorney General's Opinion. Needing to identify an MPO to satisfy the federal requirements for approval of the highway withdrawal funds, a request was made to then Governor Atiyeh to appoint a body to serve as the MPO. Atiyeh required METRO to designate some other body as the forum for regional decision making. This lead directly to the creation of JPACT in 1979. At the same time, the TPAC also was formed.

JPACT was effectively the old CRAG Board resurrected. The same membership was designated for the purposes of reviewing transportation planning documents and policies. TPAC was the transformation of the former joint efforts of the professional planning staffs of the respective jurisdictions to advise and support policy documents and processes. TPAC provided staff assistance to JPACT on an as needed basis. JPACT recommended policy and planning approvals to the METRO Board which formally accepted them. **JPACT** thus became the defacto MPO body for making recommendations to the federal government through **METRO**.

Previously, **CRAG's** internal management and decision processes appeared to suffer from a lack of continuity and authoritativeness. Each new director faced decisions which were increasingly difficult to resolve. At the end of a two year term, the frustrated director was happy to move on, leaving the position to be filled by someone else. The result was that a succession of directors failed to bring the CRAG process into focus. Political leadership was focused outside the process, first in Glen Jackson (Chairman of the Oregon Transportation Commission), then in Neil Goldschmidt. Without effective or continuing leadership, CRAG failed to sustain momentum behind any of its projects. Until Portland's mayor managed to focus and forge a political consensus through a weighted

voting process, tensions between the central cities and suburbs and the lack of transit and state involvement created a tenuous decision process.

JPACT FORMATION

As indicated above, JPACT embodied much of **CRAG's** transportation role. The agreements and alliances which were achieved to create a mixed transit and highway system planning process depended on the agreement of all parties to the process, every affected jurisdiction was involved. In having all jurisdictions involved in the same process, the CRAG system had been unique. The transition from CRAG to JPACT involved some important transformations.

The development of the organizational relationship of PACT to METRO was never fully discussed in the formation of METRO. There was a split between the parties to the process of developing JPACT over who would be the actual decision-maker. Some wanted JPACT to make the decisions, others wanted METRO to be responsible. An unwritten agreement was developed which allows METRO to approve JPACT decisions. In this way, the regional intergovernmental consensus role initiated in CRAG could develop and continue in a way which is not possible in **METRO,since** it does not play the interstate or state-wide role in **transportation** policy development role which CRAG played. (CRAG had bi-state funding, METRO is a single state organization which incorporates interstate interests **through** the JPACT).

When METRO was formed, Vancouver and Clark County, Washington created the Intergovernmental Resource Center (IRC) which serves as the MPO for that area of Washington. Their input is derived through membership on JPACT, but they are not represented on METRO. JPACT was formed as an embodiment of the transportation process of CRAG, retaining the original membership, but serving under a board with a more limited **authority**.

JPACT deals with problems in an atmosphere that presumes a continuing cooperative process. There is a dignity and professional nature in the process which contributes to the level of commitment which each of the participants brings to the process. The process is not summary - a case which is presented must be developed and made in full

- that is the expectation and the reality. It is described as a professional game where anyone (citizen, professional, political) who plays by the rules of the game will be included in the process. This professional atmosphere contributes to the confidence in the system which provide its vitality and validity.

STRUCTURE OF JPACT

JPACT currently consists of **17** members, a **structure** which has been unchanged since the committee was originally formed in early **1979**. The institutional members are as follows:

- 3 members of the **METRO** Council
- 1 Commissioner for the city of Portland
- 3 County Commissioners, one each from **Multnomah, Clackamas**, and Washington Counties in Oregon
- 3 Elected officials, one **from** each Oregon county, representing cities
- 1 Representative of the Oregon Department of Transportation
- 1 Representative of Tri-Met
- 1 Representative of the **Port** of Portland
- 1 Representative of the Oregon Department of **Environmental** Quality
- 1 Elected representative from Vancouver, WA
- 1 Elected representative from Clark County, WA
- 1 Representative from the Washington Department of Transportation

While this formal membership has not changed, many other individuals have affected **JPACT's** decision processes as advisors or influential community leaders. These individuals have included METRO staff, representatives of local governments, private citizens, and business representatives who have had an interest in the process or outcome of transportation decisions.

The continuity of **JPACT's** formal membership has contributed one major element to the political balance within which **JPACT** operates---the ability to move beyond individual interests to focus on broader, regional questions. The political tradeoffs and compromises committed in the development of a set of regional priorities have benefitted from bargains maintained and deals remembered through the static membership. New

issues and questions have been raised by the continuing cast of actors, not new actors, facilitating political consensus and stability.

Voting in JPACT was initially recorded in detail including the votes of the committee members and their identity as members of METRO, local elected officials, or representatives of agencies which were responsible for implementation. This process is no longer so formalized. Most issues are decided on the basis of a voice vote which produces a record only of the number of votes cast on each side of an issue. While dissent is possible, it occurs rarely. The consultative nature of the decision process and the interaction before votes are taken produces the consensus necessary to determine the outcomes. Hence, most votes are confirmations of the decision process.

The formal minutes of **JPACT** meetings identify the issues with which it has dealt, reflecting the relatively public process of decision making. The identification of issues and their prioritization is largely a product of the structure and composition of **JPACT's** membership and its interaction with its various sources of funding. The traditional jurisdictional responsibilities for the maintenance and development of various elements of the transportation network have tended to generate questions concerning resources. Regional projects and concerns have arisen out of the joint process of recognizing spill-over benefits and costs of solving more localized problems. Hence, suburban commuter access to Portland's CBD has not been seen as just Portland's problem but shared with suburb jurisdictions which have desired access to other areas of the region. The pursuit of funding sources, mostly federal, has driven the steps which have had to be taken in developing plans and implementing projects.

Another important feature of the JPACT decision process is that **JPACT** is a policy body. While there are representatives of a variety of jurisdictions and implementing agencies, the role of JPACT is largely one of selecting among alternatives which are presented to it. The important technical dimension of input comes from another committee, Transportation Policy Alternative Committee (TPAC). TPAC is the technical arm of the

transportation planning **process**. The membership includes the technical staffs of all the jurisdictions and agencies represented on JPACT, but adds the following members:

A representative of the Federal Highway Administration

A representative of the Federal Aviation Administration

A representative of the Urban Mass Transportation Association

A representative of the Intergovernmental Resource Center of Clark County

Six citizen representative appointed by the METRO Council.

While this is largely a representative body, there are two dynamics which strongly influence the process. The first influence is the relative size and strength of the METRO transportation staff. **METRO's** Director of Transportation Chairs TPAC and serves as Executive Director to JPACT. Reflecting earlier commitments to upgrade **METRO's** technical capacity, the staff is closely affiliated with the JPACT process, is large and has significant resources available to it for planning and in interacting with regional, state and federal governments. The METRO staff serves as the operational group for accomplishing regional planning and development. It is aided by TPAC which provides technical guidance and assistance. TPAC provides the technical expertise in both planning and the administrative requirements and implications of the transportation and development process. On occasion, professional staff from TPAC member agencies are loaned to METRO to assist in completing projects. The symbiotic relationship between the two committees has fostered a unique blending of technical and political decision making. Few decisions are made which cannot be supported **from** both perspectives.

Also of significance is the reliance on METRO generated population, transportation and economic forecasts. As a reflection of the arrangement leading up to the designation of METRO as the MPO, a formal agreement places responsibility for forecasting socio-economic changes in the METRO staff. While metropolitan jurisdictions may choose to suggest alternative growth and development scenarios, the data base for

these projections remains fixed and maintained by METRO. This has worked effectively for the area south of the Columbia River. However, there is some feeling that the development of METRO projections is inadequately influenced by forecasts from the planning agencies in Washington. This has produced a perception of bias unfavorable to transportation development north of the Columbia River.

The METRO Councillors on JPACT have had some impact on the development of policy agendas. Generally, however, the policy lead on issues comes from JPACT itself. This is in part due to the recognition of the expertise and experience which characterize TPAC. Additionally, the complexity of the funding structure and the attendant administrative processes require that events be sequenced in particular ways. TPAC has provided the expertise necessary to identify and clarify the maze of federal regulations and procedures through which the JPACT process develops its projects.

FUNDING

Funding for **JPACT** is accomplished through several mechanisms but is not permanently dedicated. Metropolitan area jurisdictions pay population per capita dues to METRO. Of **\$600,000** collected in **1988-89**, \$350.00 was committed to **JPACT** to support **METRO's transportation** staff work on JPACT activities. As the MPO, METRO receives Highway Planning and Research Funds and UMTA Planning monies (**\$450,000** in **1988-89**). A third source of funding is supplemental funds provided by metropolitan jurisdictions to upgrade **METRO's** planning ability. Tri-Met provides \$50,000 annually. Portland also contributes under an inter-agency agreement as do other jurisdictions. This third source provides another **\$400,000** annually in support of **JPACT**. Finally, special projects have supplied additional revenues in support of **METRO's** annual workplan. Support is provided also through provision of staff for project technical development. The contributions of staff serve the additional role of enhancing interaction between local planning agencies thereby providing a **firmer** foundation for inter-jurisdictional consensus than would otherwise exist. While there is some nominal differentiation between special project and routine staff funding, in practice there is a substantial intermixing of these resources.

PLANNING AGENCY INTERACTIONS

There **are** many planning agencies in the **metropolitan** area served by METRO. Each of these agencies plays its own role, but there is a high degree of interaction which serves to unite the institutional relationships . A significant factor in the process is the extent to which planning agencies **provide** staff to **JPACT** and to TPAC. Those individuals with planning expertise on a local level are frequently the individuals chosen by that jurisdiction to serve on JPACT. JPACT members also bring with them the staff who provide the technical expertise from their own jurisdictions. Since there is a great level of crossover between planning agencies and JPACT, there tends to be a substantial level of agreement on issues.

There **are** several **structural** relationships which contribute to the high degree of interagency cooperation. There is a general dependence on METRO for land use planning, traffic forecasting and population forecasts. Additionally, there are many technical advisory committees which rely on planning and forecasting from METRO in developing their recommendations. As a consequence, issues of representation and of spatial competition **are** not frequent topics on **JPACT's** agenda.

In addition to these institutional and political cultural factors, the great weight of the Portland **CBD** in the regional political economy undergirds the transport regime. During the withdrawal period downtown Portland was just beginning to confront suburban competitors for office and commercial investment. The choice of a **downtown/radial** LRT line - and the reconstruction of a **downtown/radial** freeway sharing the same **corridor** - reflected the weight of the Portland CBD in the consensus building process. Suburban business centers have, however, grown rapidly in recent years, and the now familiar pattern of suburban gridlock is evident in several outlying areas. Downtown **Portland** maintains, though, its dominant position in the region, even as it faces increasingly intense competition for investment in the activities historically concentrated there. This dominant

role is widely, if grudgingly, acknowledged, and the recognition serves as a counter to pressures that would fragment the consensus.

POLITICAL ACTORS

The Oregon congressional delegation emerged as an effective **articulator** of the regional consensus in the national government during the withdrawal period, and has continued to play this role, much as Canadian provincial governments champion the interests of their major urban centers. The absence of any competing major metropolitan area in the state has enhanced the willingness and the capacity of the delegation to serve as an effective advocate, within rough limits established by the political clout of rural interests. Similarly, in Canada each provincial government acts to mute intra-metropolitan competition, and to strengthen the competitive position of its leading metropolitan area in relation to those in other provinces.

THE NATURE OF THE CHALLENGES

The Portland regime now confronts a set of challenges which generate conflicting pressures on the consensus process. One is financial. Regional transport activists anticipate a continuing reduction in the level of federal funding for projects, necessitating an increase in state, local, and private sector contributions to offset the decline. On the one hand, reductions in the level of federal investment generates pressure to maintain the regional consensus in order to effectively compete with other metropolitan areas for a share of a shrinking federal pie. On the other hand, the prospect of lowered funding levels increases the intensity with which project sponsors advocate a higher priority on behalf of particular projects, and, therefore, the level of conflict which the consensus process must contain. Moreover, the necessity of including private sector financial participation may exacerbate these conflicts, in that places with **poor** private developmental prospects will be less able to secure commitments to projects.

A second challenge is the integration of transport projects with comprehensive land use plans. Projects and plans have uneasily coexisted since the modern field of urban planning began to take shape in mid-nineteenth century Europe. Historically speaking, transport project sponsors have easily overwhelmed the efforts of planners to constrain them within an overall design for urban growth. Planners and planning processes were greatly strengthened, however, particularly in Oregon, by the environmental movement that surfaced in the 1970s. While Portland's new transport regime began to emerge shortly after the adoption of the State's land use planning law, the interface between environmental and transport planning perspectives was not an easy one.

The new environmentally-based planning challenges the relatively **narrow** concerns of the transportation regime. In the face of this challenge, regime supporters may close ranks to defend against a broadening of perspective that might compromise the effectiveness of transport projects as facilitators of economic growth. At the same time, effective environmentally-based planning is widely seen as a crucial competitive advantage enjoyed by metropolitan Portland, as the region struggles to attract investment from Seattle

and the California urban centers afflicted by unplanned urban sprawl. The desire to maintain this widely **appreciated** competitive advantage creates pressure to restructure the regime, in order to tip the balance of power between transport projects and land use plans more toward the latter than has historically been the case.

Generally speaking, the most basic challenge to any regional consensus process is competition between subregional places to maintain and attract investment. Competition causes each business center to sponsor transport projects that will enhance the **locational** attractiveness of that particular center. Projects become weapons that places deploy to gain competitive advantage, intensely politicizing the decision-making process. Those projects that concentrate benefits in space, as freeways and rail transit lines do around interchanges and stations, generate the most controversy, as they will greatly advantage some places and disadvantage many others. In Portland, the regime emerging from the 1970s was able to contextualize projects in a manner which provided for trade-offs between centers while evading the political grid lock of intense spatial **competition**.

We noted above that the Portland CBD faces increasingly intense competition from suburban business centers, though it continues to maintain its dominant position in the regional political economy. The consensus process now includes more assertive suburban activists seeking projects that will enhance the autonomy of their centers. Designing individual projects and assembling packages of projects that will serve the development aspirations of the many competing places in this hierarchical regime becomes more problematic. At the same time, the continued dominance of downtown Portland encourages CBD activists to insist on the priority of projects that will maintain the privileged position of their place.

The consensus that was constructed during the withdrawal period was built using federal funds, so the challenge of making up for reductions in these contributions had not yet surfaced. Spreading 140 projects around the region effectively addressed the challenge of competition between places seeking to use transport projects to facilitate local economic

growth. The LRT line and the reconstructed freeway would primarily benefit downtown Portland, however, the location of LRT stations would enable CBD activists to form an alliance with their counterparts in Gresham at the eastern end of the line. Including the myriad highway and transit projects throughout the metropolitan area paved the way for activists from suburban Washington and Clackamas Counties to support the consensus. Finally, the withdrawal period coincided with the start-up phase of Oregon's statewide land use planning program. The many jurisdictions in the region, including the Metropolitan Service District (Metro), were busily mapping urban growth boundaries and preparing comprehensive land use plans that would accommodate a substantial amount of development.

CASE 1: RELOCATING A CENTRAL PORTLAND FREEWAY

During the process of updating and revising the highly regarded **1972** downtown Portland plan, proposals to relocate a stretch of Interstate freeway that skirted the edge of the CBD along the east bank of the Willamette River surfaced. The fate of these proposals illustrates how the regime responded to a land use-based challenge emanating from the region's dominant place.

This segment of Interstate 5 has come to be regarded by many neighborhood groups, civic organizations, architects, planners, and city **government** officials as a land use and design disaster, denying the public access to valuable riverfront land. The Portland Planning Commission appointed an **Eastbank** Freeway Study Options Committee to examine the possibilities, chaired by a state senator representing Portland who also chaired of the Senate Transportation Committee. The Planning Commission voted to support the Committee's recommendation to further study a realignment of the freeway that would "liberate" about 21 acres for park and related riverfront development. The regional consensus process had already approved a \$54 million project to increase the efficiency and safety of the existing freeway. The Committee's recommended alternative would add **\$70 - \$90** million to this project's cost..

Regime response to the Portland Planning Commission's proposal was swift and to the point. JPACT members, particularly elected officials representing suburban Clackamas and Washington County jurisdictions, expressed serious reservations, **worrying** that freeway relocation would "...jeopardize the hard-won position of other projects on the list." A Clackamas County Commission JPACT member pointed out that "We don't want our transportation projects held back in any way." *The Oregonian*, the major metropolitan newspaper and a staunch supporter of the consensus process, editorially cautioned that relocation money "...ought not be cut out of the region's carefully considered regional transportation agenda." (The *Oregonian*, 1988) The state senator who had chaired the Study Committee tried to calm these fears, saying "I want you all to relax. We don't want

to take it out of the hides of any one else's project." Relocation proponents noted that congressional action would be necessary to move the freeway. Leading members of the Oregon congressional delegation pointed out, however, that they would follow **JPACT's** guidance on this issue, thereby signalling their intention to maintain regime integrity (Mayer, 1988).

A great many speakers supported relocation when the Portland City Council met to consider the Planning Commission's recommendation, led by a group calling itself "Riverfront for People". Many technically and politically sophisticated people were involved in this organization, including some of the region's leading citizen transit activists, and the Director of the Portland Planning Bureau during the Mount **Hood** Freeway revolt. **JPACT's** chair, however, told the Council that "...the project wouldn't ever become a top regional priority because it addresses land-use issues more than transportation needs." (Oliver, 1988) Another **JPACT** member warned the Council of "money conflicts brewing" over the move, and said that JPACT should be involved in considering the proposed project: "If an accommodation is not worked out, open political warfare could erupt - with the result that all the region's governments could be left out in the cold." Just before the Council met the **Multnomah** County Board of Commissioners refused to support moving the freeway, arguing that the project should not take precedence over existing priorities (Kohler, 1988).

The Council voted to conduct a more detailed study of the relocation issue. Council members were distinctly reluctant to express strong opinions on the question. The study would be **carried** out by the Oregon Department of Transportation, assisted by a citizens committee. This group would consist of those individuals who had previously served on the Planning Commission's Study Committee, as well as a number of additional members drawn from **JPACT** and the Oregon Transportation Commission.

The Council's actions clearly reflected the conflicting internal and external pressures being brought to bear. Relocation advocates, including one council member

committed to the project, drew attention to the "historic **opportunity** to change the face of the city, to ensure that Portland remains the center of the region, to attract tourists, to generate economic development and to create one of the most exciting parkways in the United States." This would be the first time in the nation's history that an interstate freeway would be moved "simply because it was deemed to be in the wrong place." (Mayer, 1989) Supporters argued that this was a project worthy of a citizenry that had "**reclaim[ed]** their downtown from the decline and economic devastation created by the postwar freeway binge," (Ames, 1989) and had garnered national recognition for bold efforts in urban environmental design.

Yet the Council was clearly concerned about retribution if the City was seen as disrupting the regional consensus. More specifically, the council member most closely associated with the transport regime, JPACT member Earl Blumenauer (a Portland City Councilman), worried that the freeway relocation project would threaten the regional commitment to a network of downtown-oriented light rail lines, one of which, **Westside** LRT, was currently "enshrined" as the top priority project in the region. The unanimous Council vote to include **JPACT** members on their study committee was on a Blumenauer-sponsored motion.

The City's Freeway Options Committee ended up badly divided after three months of intensive study. The **Committee** voted 7-6 to support relocation, however, they failed to make any recommendations regarding funding. The state senator who had chaired the Planning Commission's study group likewise chaired the City Committee, and cast the **tie**-breaking vote in favor of relocation. The level of **controversy** immediately escalated. A group of fourteen Portland-area state legislators signed a letter supporting the project, and recommended that a federal demonstration grant be pursued. They were countered within two weeks by a letter signed by sixteen state legislators, most of whom represented Washington and Clackamas County constituencies, opposing the project. A JPACT member who was a Washington County Commissioner said that JPACT "probably would

not even support the idea of moving the freeway unless it was decided to 'assess the remainder of the cost to the area of benefit - the downtown (Portland) region.' The state senator chairing the Committee countered that "[M]aybe Washington County should pay' for the \$150 million **Westside** Bypass proposed in Washington County." (Green, 1989) This proposed freeway was Washington County's top priority project, and was "enshrined" in the regional consensus. A top Clackamas County **transportation** planner and TPAC member "charged that there was a 'massive inequity' in the decision-making process surrounding the east bank freeway..." and that two major County projects would be directly in conflict with the relocation (Kohler, 1989). Two Portland representatives on the **Metro** Council added to the **controversy** by announcing their support for relocation.

The consensus was stabilized, however, when the Mayor of Portland announced that he would oppose relocation. The mayor decided to follow Council member Blumenauer in banking on a network of light rail transit lines as the key transport objective for the City. The mayor was now convinced that the freeway relocation project would jeopardize future rail funding: "...an attempt to find the money [for relocation] by upsetting the carefully negotiated regional transportation plan could 'cause **tremendous** bitterness' among the city's neighbors." (Mayer, 1989) In response to the suggestion made by Riverfront for People and others that a special federal grant be sought for the project, Blumenauer argued that "Oregon's congressional delegation can only be asked to go to bat for Portland on one major issue at a time..." (Zusman, 1989) Following the mayor's announcement, two other City Council members said they would join the mayor in opposition. Together with Blumenauer this constituted a decisive 4-1 rejection of the relocation project.

Throughout the freeway relocation controversy JPACT members and other regime supporters, including the Oregon congressional delegation, clearly, self-consciously, and consistently **articulated** the importance of maintaining the regional consensus. This land use-based challenge was brought by activists operating outside the regional consensus

process. The regime withstood this challenge, effectively defending the integrity of the transport projects within its domain. A measure of the strength of the regime was the fact that even relocation proponents spoke the language of consensus arguing that their advocacy need not constitute a threat. The case illustrates how deeply wedded the local governments in the region are to the consensus process, including the Portland City Council. The Council's decision to reject the relocation project demonstrated Portland's sensitivity regarding its leading place in the regional hierarchy, and the City's capacity to refrain from attempting to exploit its dominant position. Given the self-understanding of the Portland leadership as pioneers and leading practitioners of the art of central city revitalization, this act of self-restraint testifies to the staying power of the regional transport regime as institutionalized structurally and politically through its earlier successes.

CASE 2: THE WESTSIDE BYPASS

The proposed **Westside** Bypass presents a more serious land use-based challenge to the regime than did the central Portland freeway relocation project for two reasons: (1) Many more jurisdictions are directly affected by the Bypass, including several suburban cities and Washington County at the western edge of the region and, (2) part of the proposed route would lie outside of the Metro-adopted Regional Urban Growth Boundary. The Bypass, which would be a north-south arc traversing the western edge of the metropolitan area, has raised the widely feared spectre of traffic-induced sprawl. The Bypass has been Washington County's top priority project for quite some time, especially for the western part of the County, which has experienced an electronics **industry-related** employment boom; the area is Oregon's "Silicon Forest." County activists have been pointing out that traffic increasingly circulates within the County, rather than between the County and Portland, and that the Bypass was crucially important to serve the growing economic autonomy of the area.

Following the JPACT and Metro Council decisions to add the Bypass to the regional consensus priority list, *The Oregonian* lectured Washington County officials on their responsibilities. A lecture was seen as necessary because of the perception that Washington County had historically been insufficiently attentive to regional **concerns**, had displayed a "go-it-alone, independent attitude, and was prone to pursue narrow, **growth-related** objectives. *The Oregonian* editorialized two challenges to County officials: "One is to show that participation in a metropolitan partnership is genuine and not just lip service masking insular inclinations. The other is to show enough backbone in controlling development to give the rest of the region confidence that the bypass would not lay open land supposedly protected by the urban growth boundary." (*The Oregonian*, 1987) Washington County's director of land use and transportation planning, a TPAC member, had already promised to immediately work out a program to resolve land use issues with Metro. **JPACT** approved funds for Washington County to begin preliminary engineering.

At this point in time, the Bypass project was conceived of as a **long-term** project that would be built in stages, the first stage of which would not involve any growth **management-**related concerns. The sections of the Bypass that would cross over the urban growth boundary were several years away.

The land use brew thickened when the Washington state legislature expressed interest in a third bridge over the Columbia River. This project was especially exciting to Clark County officials as one that would facilitate industrial development in their area. They hoped that another bridge would excite the Portland regional transport regime sufficiently to extend the **Westside** Bypass in a northeasterly direction all the way to the new river crossing, thereby providing a much more direct connection between Clark County and industrial development **zones** in western Washington County. The Bypass extension would, however, cross Portland's Forest Park, one of the largest urban parks in the United States, much of which was wilderness. Intense environmental opposition soon surfaced. There would soon be environmental opposition in Clark County as well, because of the routing of a connecting highway there. The Intergovernmental Resource Center, the Clark County **MPO**, strongly supported the idea and was studying it at the request of the Washington state legislature. They recommended a much more elaborate third bridge study that would be jointly funded by Washington and Oregon agencies. Clark County officials readied a presentation to JPACT to secure a regime commitment. A Washington County transportation planner approved the logic of extending the Bypass to fully encircle the metropolitan area. However, a City of Portland transportation planner and TPAC member sounded a note of caution, arguing that before funds were committed to a third bridge study, a policy question ought to be resolved: was opening up new lands for economic growth the objective, or relieving traffic congestion on an existing bridge the main concern. This planner thought the former goal was uppermost in the minds of Clark County officials. **TPAC's** chair, who was also **METRO's** director of transportation planning,

shared this perspective. The transportation regime's agenda, however, was concerned about the latter.

When the Clark County members of JPACT presented their bi-state study idea to TPAC, the technical officials clearly indicated that a third bridge would be a low-priority item on the regional transport project list. They recommended against regime (JPACT) participation in the study. **TPAC's** chair recommended instead that METRO and Clark County's Intergovernmental Relations Center cooperate on a study of congestion on existing routes and the possibilities of extending light rail transit into the County. A Clark County official asked that a vote on this recommendation be delayed while further discussions were pursued. JPACT later agreed to delay a decision.

When PACT did consider Clark County's invitation to a study, the Clark County officials presentation of their request markedly changed. They stressed looking at traffic congestion in general, and that a third bridge might be one possible answer to corridor congestion concerns. JPACT later decided to reject any examination of a third bridge, but to support a bi-state study along the lines suggested by the TPAC chair. This would involve an earlier and more concentrated look at possible LRT lines linking downtown Portland and the City of Vancouver than JPACT had previously contemplated. The Washington state PACT delegation was pleased, having decided to give priority attention to LRT in the face of concerted opposition to the third bridge idea. PACT member Earl Blumenauer, a leading LRT supporter, noted that the City of Portland would likely participate financially in such LRT studies.

While JPACT dealt with Clark County issues, the level of conflict on the **Westside** Bypass dramatically increased. 1000 Friends of Oregon, the state's land use law watchdog, legally challenged the status of the Bypass in Washington County's Transportation Plan on the grounds that land use issues had not been addressed before the County committed to the freeway in its Plan. The state Department of Land **Conservation** and Development (DLCD), which administers Oregon's land use laws, filed a separate

appeal, arguing that the County's plan **lacked** an explicit agreement that the Bypass would be dropped if state land use requirements were not met. There had been an understanding on this point between the County and the State. The State had permitted the County to include the Bypass in order to facilitate the search for financial support through the consensus process. However, the official Plan failed to make the understanding explicit. Both 1000 Friends and DLCD were concerned about the sprawl-inducing impacts of those portions of the Bypass located outside the existing urban growth boundary.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners quickly moved to include the explicit agreement sought by DLCD, and to do a study that would determine whether or not the Bypass should be excused from land use laws protecting agricultural land outside urban growth boundaries. In addition, the County committed to study alternatives to the Bypass in case the project could not be exempt from the state land use laws. DLCD then dropped its appeal. However, 1000 Friends refused to follow **DLCD's** lead, threatening to proceed with their appeal unless and until Washington County dropped all reference to the Bypass in its Transportation Plan and addressed the land use question of whether or not a freeway was needed in that **corridor** at all. This constituted a direct challenge to the transportation regime; the Bypass was enshrined in **JPACT's** and Metro's transport plan. The attorney representing 1000 Friends said "We think this is going to be used to bust the urban growth boundary."

The regime countered with a METRO Council decision to intervene in the case being heard by the Land Use Board of Appeals (**LUBA**): "METRO should be 'at the table,' the Council's presiding officer said, if 1000 Friends and Washington County wind up negotiating some sort of a settlement that could affect **METRO's** system for reaching consensus on transportation projects." ("METRO, 1989) A coalition of 36 business groups and local governments joined Metro as intervenors on behalf of the Bypass. 1000 Friends drew support from citizens organized as Sensible Transportation Options for People (STOP), which filed a separate appeal with LUBA. This was the same name as the

one chosen by the citizens group that had led the opposition to the construction of the Mount **Hood** Freeway. A veteran of the earlier citizen movement told the Washington County activists, "People can kill freeways." (Foyston, 1989) STOP stressed rail transit and incremental highway improvements as alternatives to the Bypass.

LUBA decided in favor of **1000** Friends' position, ordering Washington County to redo its **transportation** plan so that it did not appear that the County was already committed to the project. Land use analyses aimed at determining whether a freeway was needed at all in that **corridor** had to come **first**, according to LUBA. **1000** Friends hailed the LUBA decision as a "major rerouting of the **mindset**" regarding the project. Washington County and **Metro** representatives disagreed; they did not think LUBA had altered the transportation planning process they had been following at all. County Commissioners were saddened, however, that the decision would set back construction of the crucial first stage of the project for two years, while the need for the entire Freeway was restudied. The Oregonian saw the LUBA decision as a victory for comprehensive planning, which would consider land use and transportation issues together. In the wake of the Bypass ruling, a DLCD official pointed out the implications of the decision for projects being planned elsewhere in the region, particularly in Clackamas County, where similar urban growth boundary concerns were likely to emerge. State land use and **transportation** officials began meeting to clarify the rules regarding when the regime would have to take state land use goals into account, particularly those concerning defense against urban sprawl, and when particular projects would be exempt. The TPAC chair pointed out that current rules were less than clear, and welcomed the effort at clarification.

The problem of integrating land use plans and transport projects has been noted in an analysis of the state land use planning program (**DeGrove**, 1984). Integration is clearly more than a technical challenge for the regime. **1000** Friends of Oregon is an extremely well-organized, attentive, politically and technically sophisticated organization. They have prospered in their watchdog role, and stand ready and willing to oppose the regime on land

use and environmentally-related transport matters. STOP and 1000 Friends will closely monitor the formulation and implementation of the rules that emerge from the process of clarification now underway. The question is: will the regime accommodate to plans, or will the logic of the project continue to drive the urban development process.

CASE 3: LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PLANNING

After the federal government committed funds to build the **eastside** LRT line in place of the Mount Hood Freeway, the regime turned its attention to the next LRT project. A **westside** line, linking downtown Portland and the eastern Washington County city of Beaverton, emerged as the top priority project. From the point of view of Portland CBD leaders, this route would add commuter capacity in the increasingly congested Sunset Highway Corridor. The proposed line would not extend, however, into western Washington County.

JPACT endorsed a particular **westside** LRT alignment in 1983, however, the Tri-Metropolitan Transit District (Tri-Met) hesitated to apply for funds from the federal government to begin preliminary engineering on this project. Tri-Met had financial reasons to worry about applying for a matching grant. However, another cause for concern was opposition to the project that had surfaced in western Washington County. At the same time, Clackamas County transportation and economic development planners had joined with planners at the Port of Portland to propose an LRT line running south from Portland International Airport, through a connection with the **eastside** LRT line, to a major regional shopping center in the County. This line would share a corridor with the recently constructed **eastside** bypass freeway, **I-205**, for most of its length.

Washington County transport activists, particularly those in the west, were **shifting** their focus away from a **westside** LRT line to the Bypass Freeway. Applauding this shift, the Argus, one of Washington County's leading newspapers based in the western County seat of **Hillsboro**, editorialized "We would far rather see...money...spent to facilitate north-south traffic in Washington County - where it is urgently needed - rather than boosting travel from our County into downtown Portland." (Argus, March **12, 1985**) The fact that the JPACT-approved alignment did not reach into the western portion of the County - even though all Washington County business firms pay a payroll tax to Tri-Met - underlined

what many in the west felt was yet another effort by downtown Portland to use transit to capture Washington County **office** workers and shoppers.

Clackamas County officials stressed the complementary nature of their LRT proposal, arguing that the airport link would boost patronage on the **eastside** LRT line. However, they also pointed out that their LRT line would cost a great deal less than a **westside** line, since **virtually** all the necessary right of way was in governmental hands, and that it could be constructed much more quickly than a **westside** counterpart. JPACT responded by authorizing a search for possible funding sources.

Tri-Met commenced preliminary engineering on the **westside** in 1987. During the course of this work, Tri-Met was reluctantly forced to conclude that the 1983 JPACT-approved alignment was no longer acceptable. During the intervening years parts of the approved route had been built over, and a great deal more employment and residential development had taken place in the western portion of Washington County than had been anticipated. The new alignments to be considered would reach all the way to Hillsboro in the west, almost doubling the length of the line. What was most disturbing about the alignment discovery was the prospect of having the regime go through the regional consensus process once again to reach agreement on a new route.

While **westside** LRT proponents contemplated major changes in their project, Clackamas County government and technical officials continued to press their **north/south** LRT line connecting the county seat with the Portland International Airport forward as a high-priority endeavor. These officials called for building both **westside** and I-205 LRT lines as part of a regional package, ushering in a new era of cooperation between Clackamas and Washington Counties, who historically had found themselves competitors for limited transportation funds. Clackamas County's assertiveness troubled Washington County officials, however, particularly when the former attempted to compare the I-205 line with the **westside** line in a manner that reflected less favorably on the latter's priority project. A Washington County Commissioner and JPACT member said she thought

Clackamas County **officials** no longer supported **westside** LRT as the region's top priority project. She argued that adding more lines to the regional list would jeopardize finding for number one: "You can't do a little part of everything, or nothing gets done." (**Green**, 1988) A Clackamas County Commissioner who was also a **JPACT** member countered that he was "shocked and appalled by the accusation that his County was hying to disrupt the regional consensus (**Kohler**, 1988). **Clackamas** officials stressed their allegiance to the regime and to **westside** LRT, as they continued to argue that there wouldn't be any competition between the two projects since different funding sources would likely be involved.

Extending **westside** LRT to downtown Hillsboro would permit that city to join an alliance with downtown Portland and downtown Beaverton. An appropriately chosen alignment would enable the three business centers to peacefully co-exist, each enjoying an enhanced capacity to reach potential workers and shoppers locating in the rapidly growing parts of Washington County. The Hillsboro city council strongly supported efforts to bring LRT to town, as did the city council of Forest Grove, a small city beyond Hillsboro that hoped to secure a place on the line for the future.

However, two obstacles were present. The first was the concern that adopting a new alignment all the way to Hillsboro would necessitate a restudy of the entire project, delaying efforts for up to two years. The federal government had approved preliminary engineering funds solely for the 1983 alignment. In an effort to dispel any thoughts about foregoing the extension, a Washington County newspaper editorialized the crucial significance of the Hillsboro connection: "A project that ends [at the point designated by JPACT in 1983] will primarily serve commuters travelling between Beaverton and downtown Portland. A project that extends to Hillsboro will not only serve a greater number of commuters, but it will also provide a new route for intra-county travel...Indeed, the support of many Washington County residents and officials is contingent upon seeing the line extended to Hillsboro. Proceeding with plans to build the

line only to [the 1983 end point] could fracture consensus that is **starting** to grow for the light-rail project."

The other obstacle involved the politics of route selection, as an association representing land development and industrial firms in the corridor adjacent to the Sunset Highway argued for an alignment that would follow the Highway all the way from downtown Portland to Hillsboro, eliminating that portion of the LRT route in the central portion of the County between Hillsboro and Beaverton. Beaverton's planning director opposed this particular alignment, arguing that the Sunset Highway corridor route would not support the land use plans of many Washington County cities, including the plans of downtown Beaverton.

While **westside** LRT work went forward, Clackamas County officials were increasingly concerned that their LRT project languished. The County's director of transportation planning, who was a TPAC member, thought that "Portland and Washington County have formed a pretty formidable coalition. What they want, they get. Unfortunately, they do not speak for Clackamas County." (Gerdes, 1989) Earl Blumenauer bridled at the accusation that political power tactics were keeping LRT out of **Clackamas** County. He defended his cooperative efforts on behalf of County interests, and his support for bringing LRT to the County.

This was clearly a critical period for the regime. Competition for LRT funds was intensifying. Bringing western Washington County into the LRT alliance was problematic. At the same time, the **Westside** Bypass project was under attack, and Clark County officials were concerned about the capacity of the regime to meet their needs. A leading member of the Oregon **congressional** delegation, whose district includes Washington County, announced that he intended to seek additional federal funds to study the **Hillsboro westside** LRT extension, and to permit this study to be done without having to restudy the entire route, thus saving two years. The significance of this is that the project would be eligible

for 75% federal funding, rather than the 50% contribution rate that the federal government intends to institute when the current formula expires in 1991.

The Oregon delegation was successful. House and Senate transportation bills incorporated language directing the **U.S.** Urban Mass Transportation Administration to permit the **Hillsboro** extension to be conducted without delay, and providing funds for the work. Moreover, the Oregon delegation's efforts stimulated a similar effort by their Washington state counterparts, who lined up funding the **LRT** studies in a broad corridor including Clackamas County, Portland, and Clark County. Two possible Clackamas County-Clark County alignments, one via **I-205** and another via downtown Portland, would be eligible for study within this broad corridor notion. Should these provisions survive a conference committee, and there is every indication they will, the **LRT** program for the entire region will be boosted greatly enhancing the stability of the regime.

The nature of rail transit projects - the fact that they concentrate access advantages around a small number of station locations - greatly complicates the process of regional consensus building. The Portland transport regime dramatically illustrates one possible solution to the problem posed by the spatial concentration of benefits: a "coverage" strategy, including alliances between leading business centers based on transit network design. The success of the Congressional delegations, in turn based on the underlying stability of the regime, enabled the regime to pursue several rail transit possibilities simultaneously, thereby covering the region with potential rail transit benefits. The regime has also been sensitive to issues of alliance-sustaining network design. The coverage strategy requires large amounts of funding, however, to make it work. Finding the funds to construct and operate these projects is the remaining challenge to the regime that we discuss.

CASE 4: FINDING NEW SOURCES OF PROJECT FINANCE

In early 1988 JPACT created the Public-Private Task Force on Transit Finance, consisting of several **JPACT** members and representatives of leading metropolitan area business firms. Earl Blumenauer led the effort to form this task force, securing a grant from the Urban Mass Transportation **Administration** to finance its work. Blumenauer, who served as co-chair, set out what motivated him: "[I]t's clear that we can no longer be dependent on federal dollars to support large **transit** capital projects." The other Task Force co-chair, a member of the Tri-Met Board of Directors, said that one of the group's key objectives was to be "the catalyst for increased interest and investment by the business community in priority transit projects." (**Federman**, 1988) In addition to the JPACT-appointed group, a number of top business executives, led by the president of the region's largest utility and reporting to the Portland Chamber of Commerce and the Oregon Business Council, pursued the objective of building a consensus among business owners throughout the area regarding which projects they might financially support.

This was **Blumenauer's** second foray into the world of privatization. He had also spearheaded Project Breakeven, which involved the regional transit agency generating sufficient revenue to break even on its **eastside** LRT line by becoming a landowner. As originally proposed, the federal government would grant Tri-Met money to purchase land around two **eastside** LRT stations, one in central Gresham and the other near the site of a convention center that was under construction across the Willamette River from downtown Portland. Tri-Met would then lease the Gresham property to a shopping center developer, and the convention center site to a hotel developer. The agency would collect rental payments from the developers, as well as increased fare revenues from the passenger traffic generated by the two developments. Blumenauer argued that the suburban project would not compete with downtown Portland, thereby provoking opposition from CBD business groups. He justified his leadership on the land development initiative by pointing out that "We cannot afford to look at the regional rail system as pitting downtown Portland against

Gresham....**[E]ven** though my responsibilities are in the city of Portland, I am convinced I am serving the citizens of Portland best if we have a regional transit system." (Church, 1988) If the shopping center project materializes, Gresham will house the first suburban shopping center with an LRT station integrated by design. The U.S. Urban Mass Transportation Administration was reluctant to embrace Project Breakeven, because the agency does not see itself as being involved in land ownership and development, however, the agency was aware of congressional support for the project, led by the Oregon delegation.

The Public-Private Task Force and the business group recommended a variety of funding strategies modeled on Blumenauer's Project Breakeven and other joint venture strategies. In addition, both groups recommended that JPACT present a package of proposed legislation to the state legislature during the 1989 session to increase funding for the region's priority transportation projects. In early 1989 JPACT and Metro approved a set of freeway, transit, and road projects worth \$1.5 billion, and a recommended funding plan. JPACT then constituted the Transportation 2000 Committee to carry the legislative program forward, composed of members of the two study groups.

One aspect of the legislative package generated **controversy** within the regime: an extension of the Tri-Met payroll tax to local governments and non-profit organizations. These employers were currently exempt. School districts in the region generally opposed the payroll tax measure, which did not surprise the proponents, however, the Gresham City Council opposed it as well. The chair of the Senate Revenue, who was the Portland legislator centrally involved in the freeway relocation controversy, immediately charged that "Gresham had reneged on a deal made by counties and cities in the metropolitan area to support an entire package of bills aimed at improving public transit and roads in the area. I'm not **willing** to put up with this kind of nonsense with people from my region....So just count me off (of supporting the package) until you people all get your act together." The Gresham Council fell into line following this blast.

JPACT's legislative program was well-designed and strongly supported. An important source of imagery during the campaign was a Portland region free of the transportation and land use planning disasters that were devastating the western **U.S.** metropolitan areas with which Portland competed for investment. Avoiding gridlock would secure the region's economic future. Most of the legislative program survived intact, including proposals that the Oregon citizenry vote on a constitutional amendment that would **permit** local vehicle registration fees to be used for transit as well as road purposes, and a requirement that such local fees be approved by voters at the local level.

The transportation regime was now positioned to reap the full rewards of its congressional and state legislative accomplishments. The *Oregonian* editorially exhorted the regime and the region: "The opportunity is two elections away and facing a deadline [to secure a local funding match for the **westside** LRT line]. Economic growth, a city transportation system that escapes gridlock, clean air and avoiding the endless expense of pouring highway funds into an insatiable urban freeway system depend on the voters."
(The *Oregonian*, August 20, 1989)

LESSONS

SHIFTING TRANSPORTATION DECISION PROCESS

There has been a significant change in the nature of the transportation decision making process as it is constituted in the Portland metropolitan region. Much of the early process was ad **hoc**, exploratory or in response to a shifting federal environment. Much of that process has been institutionalized at the staff level of the TPAC process and through the policy discussions of the JPACT focused regime. Sources, people and procedures are established. A second significant aspect of this process is the role of JPACT in the process. With the completion and development of several plans, there is an emphasis on implementation rather than planning. A final significant shift in JPACT has been in the changing leadership in the transportation planning **processes** in the metropolitan region.

Because of the unconventional nature of the JPACT process, its unique organizational structure, its funding and its relationship to METRO, its existence is seen by some as precarious. It may be necessary to more formally recognize the existence of JPACT in order to protect its present funding sources. The result of this could be to produce a perceived loss of functions to METRO. The loss would not be a real one because METRO does, in fact, participate in the development of JPACT decisions. The **strong** chairman of JPACT and two other METRO counselors are on JPACT. They play a significant role in defining the PACT agenda and influence the processes of the committee in tailoring decisions which are palatably endorsable by the general METRO council. To say that METRO merely defers to PACT on transportation decisions would be a naively simplistic caricature. To fail to follow JPACT decisions would undermine **JPACT's** authority and power and would destroy the working arrangements which exist in the transportation decision structure. Also at risk are the state and local aspects of **JPACT's** decisions, since only in the context of JPACT are the entities outside of **METRO's** jurisdiction brought into the consensus process. To **try** to include those other entities in **METRO's** process would not be to include them on an equal footing. There are some

dissatisfactions among some entities which are part of JPACT, but which are not represented on METRO. The continuing integrity of the regional consensus represented by the regime has kept the players from radically altering the structure of PACT or changing the overall structure of the regional **transportation** project list.

There are also other threats to **JPACT's** existence. The original sources of funding are disappearing. There is increasingly greater local dominance in local transportation decision making. The federal role in transportation planning is fading and it is unlikely that the state will accept that financial role. As a result, JPACT, which is not a governmental entity, must rely on Tri-Met or some other group to supply funding. To the extent that local funding may increase so may local control of the process. That will threaten the process since it is necessary to have **all** parties to the process committed to cooperation for the process to work.

As we examine the lessons elicited from the cases presented above, it is clear that Portland's past success is the key to the **transportation** regime's hoped for future successes. Benefits won locally, statewide, and nationally by twisting the arms and picking the pockets of other politicians and governmental entities has bred a climate of working together to achieve even more and a fear of losing everything if the consensus is not maintained. Throughout the freeway relocation controversy **JPACT** members and other regime supporters, including the Oregon congressional delegation, clearly, self-consciously, and consistently articulated the importance of maintaining the regional consensus. Challenges brought by activists operating outside the regional consensus were resisted by the regime. A measure of the strength of the regime was the fact that even relocation proponents spoke the language of consensus arguing that their advocacy need not constitute a threat. The question is: will the regime accommodate to plans, or will the logic of the project continue to drive the urban development process.

Similarly, the Portland transport regime dramatically illustrates one possible solution to the problem posed by the spatial concentration of benefits of LRT: a "coverage"

strategy, including alliances between leading business centers based on transit network design. The success of the Congressional delegations, in turn based on the underlying stability of the regime, enabled the regime to pursue several rail transit possibilities simultaneously, thereby covering the region with potential rail transit benefits. Yet, at the same time, once funded the LRT lines will even further tie the regime's disparate spatial components together. Similarly, the effort represented by the public-private funding scheme to introduce new participants to the regime, also illustrates its adaptability.

Confronted with resource scarcities that would threaten the ability of the regime to deliver on the promises it has made to cover the region with transit and highway systems, **JPACT's** members were willing to expand the participant list by including private sector representatives. The success of the Transportation 2000 coalition in wresting additional resources from the state to provide matching money has further reinforced the sentiments of hanging together to support the regional program. Their success hangs on voter authorization of constitutional amendments to operationalize the legislature's generosity.

ADDITIONAL JPACT ISSUE PRIORITIZATION AND AGENDA SETTING *CONSIDERATIONS*

Still with all these success, several issues remain problematic for the regional transportation planning processes and regime. **Poor** integration with Clark County has been a major problem for JPACT. There has been no consensus on how to integrate the communities on either side of the Columbia River, There is little incentive for the Oregon JPACT delegates to support projects which primarily benefit Washington residents since the bulk of the population is south of the Columbia River. Federal funding programs driven by population based formulas automatically favor projects and programs south of the River. Hence, the Washington delegation on JPACT has not been satisfied with the support for their projects.

From the JPACT point of view, Washington interests have been given the same consideration as each Oregon county and have a state representative on the committee as well. It is not, however the same as when CRAG was the MPO for the entire area. Vancouver has now developed its own MPO in the Intergovernmental Resource Center. Its activities are loosely tied to the Oregon transportation planning processes, however.

This issue remains important in two principal ways. There is some sentiment that the Vancouver based C-TRAN bus system ought to be represented in regional transportation planning. There is further concern that the METRO plans for expanding light rail lines in several areas of the region have failed to recognize the possibility of inter-ties with Washington in the setting of regional priorities for transportation planning.

Another problem for JPACT is the under-representation of small cities. The **JPACT** structure allows one representative from each county for small cities, but individual cities are not always satisfied with that level of representation. They often feel steam-rolled by the larger interests in the process. To some degree the small cities are involved in **non-**regional transportation planning issues, thus outside of **JPACT's** interest. However, in integrating the non-regional transportation and roadway issues, there appears to remain some room for improvement.

While cities are indirectly represented on **JPACT** by the input which the county transportation planning organizations have on TPAC, there is a general reliance by the cities on the county transportation agencies to meet the needs of those cities. To a large measure this is appropriate due to the size and nature of the projects which cities have an interest in. However, when the issues are larger, those of regional economic development and urbanization for example, there is a valid concern that the regional transportation planning **organization** should be adequately accessible to the cities.

WHY DOES IT WORK IN PORTLAND?

The curiosity represented by the Portland experience is in its success in building and maintaining a working regional decision system that has adapted and grown to meet new challenges beyond those originally confronting it. While **JPACT's** original success was fueled by external resources that could be distributed to ease the burden of cooperation, current issues do not offer the same kinds of solutions. Having already committed itself to the maintenance of transit and rail based transit as keys to the livability and future of the region, JPACT must fight to find the resources necessary to fund this promised future. Its ability to transform itself both structurally and politically are a test of how well the concept of consensus and regional commitments has become institutionalized in the metropolitan area.

The clear explanations for this success are not apparent. One element has been the traditional linkage between technicians and politicians to ensure the integrity of the decisions made and viability of the projects constructed. Another component has been the key leadership of select officials at critical points in time. Finally, the fortuitous utilization of senior politicians chairing key congressional committees has generated resources central to continued success.

A great deal of luck has supported the **efforts** of the region's transportation regime. At the same time, the uncharacteristic commitment to utilize a collective consensualism to **serve** regional needs appears to reflect an underlying political culture that has been supported by strong threads of continuity despite changes in key leaders over time.

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